HOW DOES THE DIVERSITY VISA LOTTERY WORK?

ANSWER: The Diversity Immigrant Visa Program makes up to 55,000 diversity visas available annually to persons from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States. The Diversity Immigrant Visa Program is a two-stage process: (1) the Diversity Visa (DV) Lottery and (2) a visa interview. During the Lottery, persons from qualifying countries submit an electronic entry free of charge at the Lottery website, http://www.dvlottery.state.gov, during a month-long window, usually early October to early November. The entry must include exact biographical data on the entrant and all immediate family members at the time of submission. Only one entry is permitted per person. A computer-generated, random drawing chooses selectees to proceed to a visa interview. The confirmation numbers of winning entries are posted to the DV Lottery website above; official notifications are never sent by email or mail.

Once notified of their selection, the Kentucky Consular Center works with each selectee to schedule a visa interview. Selectees are not guaranteed a visa but only the right to have an interview to determine if they meet the minimum qualifications. Like other immigrants to the United States, DV applicants undergo a full medical and security screening.

To receive a visa, DV applicants must pass these requirements and must have at least the equivalent of a U.S. high school education or have, in the past five years, two years of work experience in an occupation requiring at least two years of training or experience.
Unfortunately, and increasingly, some websites try to scam potential entrants to the lottery.

These websites attempt to require an entrant to pay for services and information about immigration procedures that are free on the Department of State website or through U.S. Embassy or Consulate websites. Additionally, these websites may require an entrant to pay for services they are unlikely to receive, such as fees for applications and visas.

Information about these types of scams can be found on our website at http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/ immigrants/types/types_1749.html. Once scammed, entrants are unlikely to have their money returned and may be subject to identity fraud/theft. Scam victims have a few resources to report these crimes, through the Federal Trade Commission's e-consumer website, www.econsumer.gov or the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crime Complaint Center, www.ic3.gov.

The online registration period for the 2013 Diversity Visa Program (DV-2013) will begin at on Tuesday, October 4, 2011, at noon, Eastern Daylight Time, and conclude on Saturday, November 5, 2011, at noon, Eastern Daylight Time.